



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE
MILLINGTON TN 38055-0000**

5720
PERS 00J6/20190245
March 15, 2019

Ms. Jaclyn Lee
WVEC-TV
613 Woodis Avenue
Norfolk, VA 23510

Dear Ms. Lee:

SUBJECT: YOUR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request of February 27, 2019. First, you seek the exact number of non-selects, decliners/DPMs/DH Selects, slate requirements for the VFA community during FY 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. Second, you seek the numbers and the calculation that yielded a 250% increase in EA-18G pilots taking the Department Head bonus. Third, you seek Navy strike fighter pilot/Navy pilot staffing numbers reported to Congress during the year 17, 18, 19, and 20. Your request was received in this office (PERS-00J) on February 27, 2019, and has been assigned correspondence number CNPC20190245 by this command.

Enclosed you will find available responsive information for the first and second portions of your request. Please note for the first part of your request seeking VFA community numbers we are unable to provide you with FY-20 data as it is not yet available. We were unable to locate a responsive record for the third part of your request in which you seek Navy strike fighter pilot/Navy pilot staffing numbers reported to Congress from 2017 to 2020.

If you believe an adequate search of this command's records was not conducted for the FY-20 information responsive to the first portion of your request or the 2017 to 2020 information reported to Congress for the third part of your request, you have the right to appeal this "No Records" determination, in writing, to the Office of the Judge Advocate General, OJAG Code 14, 1322 Patterson Avenue SE Suite 3000, Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5066.

Should you believe the submission of an appeal necessary, it must be received in that office within 90 calendar days from the date of this letter in order to be considered. Please attach a copy of this letter and the original request. Include a statement regarding why you believe this command may possess

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records responsive to your request. Please mark both the envelope and your appeal letter "FOIA/PA APPEAL."

No assessable FOIA fees were associated with the processing of your request. I am the official responsible for this "No Records" response regarding records maintained by this command. Should you wish to discuss this matter, you may contact the undersigned at (901) 874-3165.

You can also contact the DON FOIA Public Liaison, Christopher Julka, at Christopher.a.julka@navy.mil or at (703) 697-0031. In addition, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) provides a voluntary mediation process for resolving disputes between persons making FOIA requests and the Department of the Navy (DON). Their website is below:
<https://www.archives.gov/ogis/about-ogis/contact-information>.

Sincerely,

D.P. German

D. P. GERMAN
FOIA/PA Officer
By direction

DON-Navy-2019-004235 FOIA Request Response

1. Numbers of non-selects, decliners/DPMs/DH Selects, slate requirements for VFA community (pilots) during FY 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

FY	O4 Cadre	DPM	Brd Eligibles	DH Selects	DH Non-Selects	DH Decliners	DHs to Slate	Slate Goal	VFA DH Gaps
16	88	10	78	56	22	17	39	56	0
17	83	19	64	64	0	19	45	55	0
18	99	26	73	65	8	14	51	65	0
19	75	32	43	43	0	16	27	60	25
20	N/A...has not happened yet, so no data.								

Note: Aviation filled all VFA DH billets in the Fleet FY16 through FY18 despite challenges with VFA mid-grade officer pilot retention. The reason for this is many of the billets for fill don't specifically require a VFA pilot (1310s) LCDR, and instead may be filled by VFA Naval Flight Officers (1320s) LCDRs, or VFA 1310/1320s of other ranks besides LCDR, or by transition pilots from other communities such as VAQ in some cases, to continue to man squadrons appropriately to meet operational requirements. Also...each year's slate goal is only a snapshot for that board cadre. In most cases, each year there are multiple "banked" officers selected from prior year boards who were temporarily held up (e.g., for medical reasons or in Joint Duty assignments) that were now released and could be applied to fill DH shortfalls.

FY19 was the first year that the shortfall of preferred VFA 1310 selects (slate goal) grew to the point that Aviation was unable to fill all DH billets in absolute terms (regardless of mitigations such as described above). Thus across 58 TACAIR commands, there were potentially 25 gapped DH seats in the fleet. Aviation apportions those gaps to units synchronized with operational requirements to ensure deploying units remained fully manned.

2. In a story that aired February 26, 2019 on our competitor station, WTKR, the Navy disclosed a 250% increase in EA-18G pilots taking the Department Head bonus. Please provide the numbers and that calculation that yielded a 250% increase.

There were 2 FY17 DH Bonus Program takers from the EA-18G community who had Minimum Service Requirement (MSR) expirations in FY17. There were 5 FY18 DH Bonus Program takers from the EA-18G community who had MSR expirations in FY18 or later as their "first time" bonus election. This equates to a 250% increase in Bonus takers between FY17 and FY18 in year-to-year comparison.

Also of note...it is important to caveat the EA-18G pilot numbers are impacted heavily by relatively small changes in take rates. This is because the community size is very small for this niche group in Navy Aviation. For the DH Boards, for instance, total EA-18G pilot eligibles are almost always below 15 total since this particularly community is relatively small. In short, small changes in bonus take rates and retention can have a very significant impact on this platform. This would be in contrast with a much larger community such as VFA pilot, where eligible populations are significantly larger each year.

3. I am requesting the Navy strike fighter pilot staffing numbers reported to U.S. Congress during year 17, 18, 19, 20.

The Navy does not submit an annual strike fighter pilot staffing number to Congress. No such requirement exists for strike fighter, or any other Navy Aviation community pilot or NFO numbers.

Therefore, unable to provide data for this request as such Congressional reports do not exist.